NUMB. XX.

The GUARDIAN.

——————Minuti
Semper & infirmi eſt animi, exiguique voluptas
Ultio——— Juv.

Friday, April 3. 1713.

ALL Gallantry and Faſhion, one would imagine, ſhould riſe out of the Religion and Laws of that Nation wherein they prevail; but alas! in this Kingdom, gay Characters, and thoſe which lead in the Pleaſures and Inclinations of the faſhionable World, are ſuch as are readieſt to practiſe Crimes the moſt abhorrent to Nature, and contradictory to our Faith. A Chriſtian and a Gentleman are made inconſiſtent Appellations of the ſame Perſon; you are not to expect eternal Life, if you do not forgive Injuries, and your mortal Life is uncomfortable, if you are not ready to commit a Murder, in Reſentment for an Affront: For good Senſe as well as Religion is ſo utterly baniſhed the World, that Men glory in their very Paſſions, and purſue Trifles with the utmoſt Vengeance; ſo little do they know that to Forgive is the moſt arduous Pitch human Nature can arrive at: A Coward has often Fought, a Coward has often Conquer'd, but *a Coward never Forgave.* The Power of doing that flows from a Strength of Soul conſcious of its own Force, whence it draws a certain Safety, which its Enemy is not of Conſideration enough to interrupt; for 'tis peculiar in the Make of a brave Man, to have his Friends ſeem much above him, his Enemies much below him.

Yet though the neglect of our Enemies may, ſo intenſe a Forgiveneſs as the Love of them is not to be in the leaſt accounted for by the force of Conſtitution, but is a more ſpiritual and refined Moral, introduced by him who dy'd for thoſe that perſecuted him; yet very juſtly delivered to us, when we conſider our ſelves Offenders, and to be forgiven on the reaſonable Terms of Forgiving; for who can ask what he will not beſtow? Eſpecially when that Gift is attended with a Redemption from the cruelleſt Slavery to the moſt acceptable Freedom. For when the Mind is in Contemplation of Revenge, all its Thoughts muſt ſurely be tortured with the alternate Pangs of Rancour, Envy, Hatred, and Indignation; and they who profeſs a Sweet in the Enjoyment of it, certainly never felt the conſummate Bliſs of Reconciliation. At ſuch an Inſtant the falſe Ideas we received unravel, and the Shineſs, the Diſtruſt, the ſecret Scorns, and all the baſe Satisfactions Men had in each others Faults and Misfortunes, are diſpelled, and their Souls appear in their native Whiteneſs, without the leaſt Streak of that Malice or Diſtaſte which ſullied them: And perhaps thoſe very Actions, which, (when we looked at them in the oblique Glance with which Hatred doth always ſee Things) were Horrid and Odious, when obſerved with honeſt and open Eyes, are Beauteous and Ornamental.

But if Men are averſe to us in the moſt violent Degree, and we can never bring them to an amicable Temper, then indeed we are to exert an oppoſitive Oppoſition to them; and never let the Malice of our Enemies have ſo effectual an Advantage over us, as to eſcape our good Will. For the neglected and deſpiſed Tenets of Religion are ſo Generous, and in ſo Tranſcendent and Heroick a manner diſpoſed for publick Good, that 'tis not in a Man's Power to avoid their Influence: for the Chriſtian is as much inclin'd to your Service when your Enemy, as the moral Man when your Friend.

But the Followers of a Crucified Saviour muſt root out of their Hearts all Senſe that there is any thing great and noble in Pride or Haughtineſs of Spirit; yet it will be very difficult to fix that Idea in our Souls, except we can think as worthily of our ſelves, when we practiſe the contrary Virtues; we

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